

Summary Report

Transitions Roundtable: A focus on fatherhood after incarceration

Saint John's University
Wednesday June 29, 2005



The Transitions Roundtable, sponsored by the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network, was convened at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, on June 29, 2005. Sponsored by a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation, the goals of the one-day event were to invite professionals working in corrections and in the fatherhood field to gather to (1) identify barriers that fathers encounter as they re-enter their families, neighborhoods and communities; and (2) propose organizational and community strategies that may be implemented to promote fathers' successful transition and reduce recidivism.

There were 68 participants in attendance, representing five state correctional facilities, four county jails and a wide range of community agencies.

Paul Masiarchin, State Coordinator of the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network (MFFN) welcomed the participants and staffed the event.

Neil Tift and Dwaine Simms then helped participants determine what the group hoped to achieve during the roundtable and establish operating ground rules for the day.

In order to put the work of the roundtable in context, profiles of the state prison system and a county jail were displayed. Tim Lanz presented an overview of Minnesota's adult prison population in the eight state correctional facilities and offered a comparison of national to state prison statistics. Tim explained that methamphetamine abuse and longer sex offender sentences have been major sources of recent growth in the state prison population. Phil Draskowski, representing Dakota County Jail programs, explained the importance of evidence-based practices in county jail programs. The services and educational opportunities offered in jails are often impacted by the short time that many inmates spend in the county facilities.

A panel discussion, presented by two ex-offenders who are fathers, offered some helpful insights that include: Housing (especially in a safe neighborhood) and employment are major barriers in any transition; many ex-felons have very limited cognitive skills training; only a small percentage of incarcerated men are eligible for work release, which is a significant help in successful transitions; the consistent structure of prison life is attractive and beneficial for some offenders; foster care and grandparents are being negatively impacted by a growing number of incarcerated parents; life after release tends to be very tough due to constant reminders of status as an offender; probation holds men to be accountable and; fear is what keeps people in the community from desiring to work with ex-felons.

Fatherhood Panel Recommendations

Community agency professionals can:

- Create employment opportunities with employers by approaching them directly to create positive relationships;
- Work with employers to pursue tax credits and insurance bonds that are available for hiring ex-felons;

- Provide a positive force by working with employers to support the hiring of ex-felons;
- Make connections and provide resources for ex-offenders.

Correctional facilities can:

- Allow incarcerated fathers to stay connected to their children until their release through a range of supports: visiting policies, friendly waiting rooms, transportation for family members, affordable phone calls, audio tapes or DVD recordings through the mail, etc.;
- Develop strategies to help men complete BCA forms, which are very complicated.

Probation and parole officers can:

- Establish methods to help fathers be held accountable as competent parents;
- Enhance the capacity to be an involved father to his children.

Ex-offenders can:

- Remain as active as possible to survive after incarceration;
- Volunteer at a food shelf or men's program, pursuing any work that is richly rewarding and where one can talk about one's history of offense openly;
- Be available to the community as a resource provider, to get over the sense of powerlessness and fragility;
- Create a positive network for oneself and use it. Make new friends in order to stay straight;
- Find ways to get over feelings of being disenfranchised.

Family and friends can:

- Become more involved in promoting solutions;
- Encourage appropriate, positive father-child relationships.

Everyone can:

- Focus on re-creating a structured environment for the ex-offender through safe housing, stable employment, three square meals, staying away from chemical and alcohol, volunteering, establishing new routines and making other healthy choices one day at a time;
- Help ex-offenders start anew by remembering: "Get to know me before you categorize me."

Luncheon Presentation: Thoughts from the Hennepin County Workhouse

The luncheon speaker, Sig Fine, Director of the Hennepin County Workhouse, presented the results of research conducted at that facility (see Attachment A, page 5, below). Notably, one-half of all offenders believe that employment will be a major barrier upon release from the workhouse.

Mr. Fine offered his observations about transitions. Barriers to be faced include getting ready for release, going home, staying home, adjusting to supervision, and reconnecting with extended families.

One thing that correctional facilities can do to assist in transitions is to open their doors to community service providers to come in and work with offenders. Mr. Fine explained that

correctional facilities must open jail doors, because the jails cannot do this work in isolation. Corrections must take the lead to invite people from the community in to their programs.

Mr. Fine cited a number of facts and statistics. For example, if a felon does not have a secure job or option to return to a career after release, over 60% will more than likely re-offend. It is estimated that 650,000 adults will be released from correctional facilities across the county in 2005 and will face many barriers to employment (many of them will face racist and sexist attitudes). The younger men are experiencing situations much differently than many of the old timers being released today.

Mr. Fine talked in-depth about employing ex-offenders. It is important for social service workers to “sell” their programs when talking with people about employing ex-offenders. For example, inform potential employers that “even though the ex-felon made a mistake he is still capable of going to work. Ex-felons, once hired, become some of your most loyal employees because they will be committed to doing a good job because you provided them with the opportunity to work when no one else would.” Mr. Fine suggested that social service programs could consider starting a public sector work program – if a person is doing well, offer him/her a full-time position.

There are various transportation-related barriers that offenders face while in prison and after their release. Distance from the correctional facility presents a huge impediment to family giving their support to incarcerated fathers. Why is it a problem for someone on probation to be in a car with another ex-felon, especially when many of them will ride the bus together? If someone is caught transporting ex-felons in their car or part of their job requires them to provide transportation, insurance rates will be increased by the insurance provider.

Re-entry Policy Council Recommendations

In the afternoon session, Norma Campos, Glen Palm and Rebecca Ahlstrand presented recommendations from the Re-entry Policy Council for participants to consider and generate local applications. The three general topic areas included parent education, connections between fathers and children, and organizational collaboration.

The recommended applications include:

- A curriculum needs to be offered that helps incarcerated fathers address family violence issues.
- Incarcerated fathers need to be allowed to establish and maintain on-going connections with their children prior to their release.
- Correctional facilities need to provide comfortable and appealing visiting areas for children to spend time with their fathers.
- Family literacy needs to be emphasized and supported.
- Improve the “bridges” between the Department of Corrections and communities by enhancing communication and technology systems.
- Coordinate service provision by correcting internal differences in various state systems (DOC, courts, DHS, probation & parole, etc.)
- Systems need to employ female advocates to encourage mothers to allow father involvement at all stages of child development.
- Consider more opportunities for restorative justice to be applied, especially for the older offenders.

- Create a state-wide inventory of services available to fathers in transition (similar to a Dads' Directory).
- In order to assist with smooth transitions, correctional facilities need to establish collaborative relationships with culturally sensitive programs that address:
 - Child support
 - Case management (continuity of care)
 - Head Start
 - Family support services
 - Co-parenting
 - Lawyers and other advocacy services
 - Workforce development
 - Housing
 - Health care
 - Chemical abuse intervention
 - Mental health problems

Suggestions to Help in Transitions

In the afternoon, attendees spent a large portion of the time considering strategies for systemic change to improve the transition of fathers from correctional facilities to their families and communities (see Attachment B, starting on page 6, below). Attendees answered the question, "Where do we go from here?" in the areas of 1) Public Policy; 2) Practice; 3) Research; 4) Evaluation; and 5) Other. Additional suggestions that attendees discussed include:

- Sponsor transition fairs that permit community service providers to come into the facilities to assist with identifying specific needs.
- Simplify intake process – know who is in prison (i.e., ask if the men are fathers).
- Promote family centered approaches.
- Strengthen access to services, especially in rural areas.
- Improve judicial overview.
- Implement permanency plan – consider challenges of incarcerated parents.
- Don't forget the important element of spiritual support.
- Develop mentoring assistance for fathers .
- Consider specific AA groups for fathers returning to the community.

The roundtable was brought to a close with asking each participant to sign an Individual Commitment to Act.

MFFN thanks all of the committee members, presenters, and volunteers who helped to make this roundtable meeting a success. Special thanks to Neil Tift for countless hours of support in planning the meeting, selecting background reading materials, contacting presenters, facilitating portions of the meeting, and writing much of this follow up report.

Attachment A:

Survey Results from the Hennepin County Workhouse

Major barriers that offenders believe they will have to face upon release from the correctional facility include:

- 50% say employment
- 38% criminal history
- 33% housing
- 32% transportation
- 28% addiction
- 27% financial obligations
- 22% lack of positive support
- 16% mental health
- 11% physical
- 53% in Minneapolis, 13% in Suburbs, 8% St. Paul, & 4% out of Cities
- 48% specific to probation [i.e., ex-offender was assigned a probation officer]
- 52% no supervision [i.e., ex-offender was not assigned a probation officer]

Attachment B

Where do we go from here?

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June 29, 2005

Minnesota Fathers & Families Network
www.mnfathers.org



The following ideas were suggested by attendees of the “Transitions Roundtable” hosted by the Minnesota Fathers & Families Network at St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Under each topic, attendees provided comments and suggestions based on the following three questions:

- a. What systemic changes should we suggest be pursued in Minnesota over the next five years to enhance opportunities for fathers to transition from correctional facilities into their communities and neighborhoods?
- b. How do we get there from here?
- c. What would your agency/organization/department be willing to contribute to these changes?

PUBLIC POLICY

- 1) a) Juvenile incarcerated “fathers” are tracked and helped to establish paternity, build relationship with children; education of legislators about positives of rehabilitation; funding for training state workers; b) Add question to intake papers to inquire about paternal status; c) Continue to educate about Fathers’ Adoption Registry, recognition of parentage, and other legal issues.
- 2) a) Change the policy that penalizes a parolee/probationer to offer transportation support to another parolee/probationer; b) Review research, engage, inform, advocate, put it to a vote; c) Engage and educate our clients about they should vote.
- 3) a) Fund a resource coordinator to establish a website for practitioners and offenders; b) Continue on the path this conference started by compiling ideas and resources; c) Establish a contact.
- 4) a) Reframe the issue to highlight benefits to community to get more buy-in. Unfortunately, the benefits for kids and families aren’t enough to get funding in current political climate. b) Educate policy makers with strong data. c) I will share info with my legislators if the info is given to me in an easy to forward format. Maybe do email alerts when issues are up for discussion.
- 5) a) Equal visitation rights in correction facilities. b) Educate on involvement of fathers; break down barriers that prevent it now. c) Advocate in our community.
- 6) a) Stop treating offenders like second class citizens. c) Continue to provide community-based peer support for transitioning ex-offenders.
- 7) a) Invite policy makers to roundtable meetings. Provide information equally for both female and male offenders to include children/visitation. b) Advocate. c) Advocate.
- 8) a) Promote understanding of need for parenting education and support for incarcerated men and women. b) Write grants for funding. Collaborate with community corrections. c) Advocate for need to provide parenting after domestic violence education groups in prison and after release.
- 9) a) Make it possible for community resources to enter correctional facilities to provide services to offenders before release, so they can also set up services for after release. b) Lobby and advocate for change/ Stop putting into building prisons and put into programming support. c) Support any and all community resources who want to assist in providing transitions services.
- 10) a) More work with employers so ex-offenders will have work opportunities.
- 11) a) Re-establish a discretionary parole board in place of mandatory minimum sentencing for non-violent offenders. Educate the public about ramifications of “get tough on crime” policies on the family and on re-entry. b) Advocate with law makers and educate the public on effects of longer incarceration when parole is a better option. PSA and other methods to help public view former prisoners as neighbors. c) I would be willing and make time to serve on planning committees / task forces to further these projects.

- 12) a) Contact and educate state, county and community leaders regarding the importance of father reunifications with family after incarceration. b) Identify target population and market the concept.
- 13) a) Commitment from policy makers and legislators to fund programs around parenting and re-connecting with family. b) Write to legislators as agency/organizations and tell them / educate about needs in this unfunded area. c) Send information from our inmates / release surveys to legislators regarding need for programs regarding transitions.
- 14) a) An updated resource book for fathers upon release (housing, employment, health, child support, transportation, custody, etc.) b) Create a list of resources and make it policy to issue the manual to all fathers upon release. c) Provide a list of services.
- 15) Develop public awareness of and support for involved fathers. a) Identify incarcerated fathers upon admission and provide comprehensive services to assist with family law issues and to stay connected with family; b) Work with current MCFs to implement the identification process and development of services.
- 16) a) Additional monetary resources promoted toward funding offender re-entry programs; b) Legislature needs to be educated and it would help if the economy improved.
- 17) a) Integrate opportunities for job training (ex-offender) into grant or tax incentive state programs; b) Develop economic justification models showing recidivism vs. job training and placement; c) Provide cost free assistance to employers for development of apprenticeship programs.
- 18) a) Change child support orders to reflect what men can afford without the current legal steps/barriers; b) Create a system to communicate between DOC and DHS.
- 19) a) Provide free legal advice to fathers re: custody issues; b) Speak out; invite legislators to our workshops; c) Speak to local groups and community members about the importance of fatherhood; share our program with other agencies in the state so it can be duplicated.
- 20) a) More all-around advocacy on behalf of ex-offenders, especially in relation to employment, i.e., state-subsidized incentives for employers to hire felons, continued relationships w/felon-friendly employers – also housing opportunities and subsidies; b) Advocacy in general, collaborations with women's organizations, vigilant work; c) Demonstration projects, research and evaluation, case advocacy, etc.
- 21) a) Staff or volunteers to act as mentors for detainees – follow up reminders and/or continuing education including the whole family if possible; b) Funding for more staff connecting with more volunteers; c) Print newsletter about parenting information and upcoming educational opportunities to detainees within community.
- 22) c) Develop computer classes/skills; develop job resources/leads.
- 23) a) Make parenting classes mandatory to all DOC inmates; make all education mandatory to all DOC inmates; b) Make state statutes require this.
- 24) a) Draft relevant fathers' policy and standardize for the state; b) Lobby state and county to standardize policy/implementation.
- 25) a) Funding for basic life skill programs in county and state correctional facilities (include parent ed, financial management, chemical use, housing issues); b) Ask Legislature to put money here rather than build more beds; c) Can provide curriculum and training on Rent Wise, Dollar Works, Positive Parenting; Model programs shared.
- 26) a) Change DOC and county corrections policies to allow equal opportunities for visitation with children – equal for men and women; b) Study existing policies; draft model policies; lobby for changes.
- 27) a) Less red tape and easier access for fathers in prison to communicate and be able to “healthily touch” their children; b) Advocate.
- 28) a) Advocate for money for more fathering initiatives in prisons/jails; b) Connect with policy makers and politicians; c) Advocate with elected and appointed policy makers.
- 29) a) Increased opportunities for family members to get help with transportation to correctional facilities to visit incarcerated fathers.
- 30) a) Bring awareness and outlines in documented form – by government involvement; b) PSAs around returning to the community; c) Community law education classes; also public billboards.

PRACTICE

- 1) a) Coordinate and streamline programming throughout facilities in the state (all facilities offer same effective, theory based or research based programs) throughout incarceration; b) More roundtable meetings like this; spread knowledge of Minn. Fathers & Families Network; c) Reach out to different correctional institutions to offer Dads Make a Difference curriculum.

- 2) a) Get direct supervision system in all county and state facilities; add working with incarcerated parents to licensing requirements for social workers; b) Review Dr. Reed's template; amend courses in college level programs; offer internships; c) Name former inmates who benefited from such a system to offer positive testimony.
- 3) a) CSED staff in prison intake to help offenders reduce orders for child support; b) CSED needs to keep this a priority; c) we will provide the staff with hardware and software and the forms needed.
- 4) a) Educate the public as to the importance of father involvement in our communities. b) Through actively advocating for positive father involvement; marketing. c) To continue to work with our community to heighten awareness and support from public.
- 5) a) Collaboration with DOC to provide services. b) Identify who can provide what services and where. c) Continue to offer Dads Make a Difference in juvenile detention settings.
- 6) a) More parent education programs in corrections. b) More awareness of services needed. More funding of such services. c) Continue our services for parent education.
- 7) a) Public education; condemn politically inflammatory rhetoric. c) Continue to provide community-based peer support for transitioning ex-offenders.
- 8) a) Less political practices; equal court decisions for both males and females; provide direct educational services in correctional facilities. b) Advocate. c) Continue providing direct services.
- 9) a) Promote understanding of need for parenting education support. b) Write curriculum based on latest research. c) Provide direct service of domestic violence education group.
- 10) a) Longer term for re-entry preparation – currently 6 weeks (?); maybe a year would be better. b) More resources for the transition department. c) Advocate. Collaborate on legal issues-education.
- 11) a) Collaboration with agencies willing to come into correctional facilities to work with fathers / offenders before release. b) Teach offenders accountability and then direct them to resources that will support change.
- 12) a) Increase awareness of ex-offenders' difficulty in making a successful transition.
- 13) a) Begin establishing a "Paternity at Birth" movement/campaign. b) Have helping agencies agree to buy into the concept and include questions designed to identify fathers and help them establish paternity. c) Provide literature; support efforts; speakers bureau.
- 14) a) Develop, require and teach a parenting education program at all MCFs for all inmates; b) Pull together current and potential providers to write a curriculum and develop a suggested timetable of implementation; c) Be a part of this process.
- 15) c) Transitions Coalition.
- 16) a) Easier access to facilities for groups; community liaison; b) DOC Policy; information sharing between communities and facilities; a state position similar to Minncor Liaison; c) Make connections possible at FRB; display evidence of need.
- 17) a) Enhance collaboratives at the local level; b) Clearly identify subsets of the population to better connect to services, develop collaborations, etc. c) Share lessons learned re: collaborations, develop new partnerships, etc.
- 18) a) Develop a systemic approach to collaboration; a collaboration not always initiated by Corrections; b) Networking / education; c) Whatever it takes for Moose Lake.
- 19) a) Provide a single point of contact (resource specialist) upon release for offenders.
- 20) a) Create housing specific to non-custodial parents transitioning from prison; b) Understand non-custodial parents as parents, not just unaccompanied adults; c) Spearhead creating such housing (w/supportive housing models)
- 21) a) Better ways to incorporate children into some of the parenting efforts / programs.
- 22) a) Increased collaborations between appropriate transitional agencies, continue and advance more humanistic programming in prisons for individuals related to family, skills, etc.; b) Awareness of what is available, openness between organizations, etc.; c) I will continue to volunteer my time.
- 23) a) All agencies work together – collaboration! b) Get familiar with community resources and jail / prison programs which enhance father's roles – link fathers with them; c) GALs advocate for fathers' involvement with kids after incarceration, if appropriate, and recommend programs for fathers.
- 24) a) Add parenting resources to facility library; b) Funding for purchase of resources, used books, or donated materials.
- 25) b) Collaborate; c) Gather resources; develop thoughts, ideas, letters of incarcerated parents to their children.
- 26) a) Money to offer services; b) Grant money; c) Continue to offer positive parent parenting, money management, GED, AA and other classes to the detainees at the county level.
- 27) a) Enforce federal standard for including fathers in service planning; b) Inclusion in all service planning for child/father and families; c) See that fathers are included in case plan.

- 28) a) Fathers have contact with children when in work house; b) Challenge directors of programs to allow this to happen (if safe to do so).
- 29) a) Expand parent education classes to all correctional facilities in Minnesota; b) Audit of where classes are and are not held now – comparative review of existing programs; c) Council on Crime and Justice could provide classes at some facilities.
- 30) a) Incorporate more culturally specific distinctions and needs in curriculum; b) Use studies and research and even conduct new research to implement into curriculum.
- 31) a) Look for community-based service providers to go into facilities for continuity in and out of facility; b) Look for agencies in the communities where the offenders will be released to find money – faith based agencies to partner with; c) Be an active participant in and out of facilities; participate in writing of grants.
- 32) a) Ask OCSE and DOC to work together to allow/help incarcerated fathers to modify their child support orders.
- 33) a) At transition, dads should be introduced personally to a coordinated system of support; b) Encouragement of collaboratives and even resource sharing at the local level; c) Put this need “on the table” in the community (I will do this at the Early Childhood Coalition meeting); be available as a resource and resource link.

RESEARCH

- 1) a) How many fathers are in the system and how does parenting education affect recidivism rates if at all? How many juvenile offenders become adult offenders? How many of these are fathers?
- 2) a) Amend evidence based practice to find out if same ethnicity is more effective (should worker and client share same ethnicity); b) Advocate and volunteer; c) Assist in recruiting, training advocates and volunteers.
- 3) a) Continue researching how father involved with their children affect our future as a society in positive ways. b) Strive to strengthen our progress and increase offered education and support.
- 4) a) Impact of connecting / reconnecting incarcerated / released parents with their children – healthier families and kids and communities, lower recidivism, increased public safety. b) Talk to higher education folks to generate interest in doing these research projects. Give researchers access.
- 5) a) Identify areas of needed services and service gaps; measure effectiveness of existing programs.
- 6) a) More research information on impact on the connections between males and children. Childhood traumas / effects due to parental incarceration. b) Research funding better documentation of information in part by the service providers. c) Collect better data!
- 7) a) Track ex-offender efforts; give incentives for checking in.
- 8) a) Research the cause or barriers that led to offenders re-offending. b) Re-offenders should be given the opportunity to talk about these issues. c) Possibly help with data collection.
- 9) a) Conduct longitudinal research on the long-term results of father programming while incarcerated for inmates and their children; b) Consult U of M researchers; c) Consult; help identify fathers currently involved in our program.
- 10) a) Need to develop a demographic measuring tool to identify precisely where the true need lies.
- 11) a) Are fathers successful when they re-enter society? b) Track known fathers over a certain time period and compare pre-release services; c) data collection.
- 12) b) Partner CBOs and higher education and/or other research organizations regarding transitions; c) Collaborate with Universities to conduct “action research” and other research projects.
- 13) a) Employment placement and retention research for ex-offenders; b) Wilder Foundation (?)
- 14) a) Cost-benefit studies of services to incarcerated fathers that shows they save money in the long run; b) Look for funding or ask the state to look at this.
- 15) Track fatherhood statistics at the time of incarcerating to better provide and develop programs encouraging active parenting in the early stages of incarceration; b) Implement questions on inmate surveys.
- 16) a) Any and all – find evidence of discrimination and use it to advocate.
- 17) a) Why jails won’t let kids come visit fathers?
- 18) a) In orientation process (of detainees) ask if father; how many children; custodial? Parenting classes: keep attendance records; c) Can begin to keep track of numbers and statistics; continue parenting classes; begin cognitive skills classes; child development classes?
- 19) a) Continue gathering new statistics.
- 20) Juvenile and Adult: a) Collect accurate data on fathers regardless of child support/visitation; b) Track multiple programs fathers use upon release.

- 21) a) Collect additional data for fathering; impact evaluation needed for parent education programs (similar across the state); immediate feedback and follow up; b) Work with U of Minn. To have graduate student work on this for thesis; c) Extension Service could help make these connections.
- 22) a) Correlation of increased father involvement with recidivism; c) Council on Crime and Justice could conduct the research, with funding.
- 23) a) "Nail down" the effectiveness of parenting (fathering) education classes in prison; b) Devise new ways and methods to effectively evaluate results of parenting classes.
- 24) a) Develop and test father/parenting education curricula specific to the population and violence prevention; b) Collect and coordinate resources – central clearinghouse for partner agencies; c) Offer training for our model, participate in conference sharing.
- 25) a) Research correlating effectiveness of parent programs which are established in the prisons with connections dads and kids have after the fathers are released.
- 26) a) The system change to being a clear transition source; b) Wrap around services and clear communication of the services and need; c) Logic models and support per agency.
- 27) a) Track fathers in prisons and jails; monitor their attendance in parent education classes; b) Develop a standardized format for tracking and evaluation across correctional facilities.

EVALUATION

- 1) a) How evidence based programming with multi-spoke approaches directly affects recidivism? What transitional services are offered at each level of corrections in the state of Minn.? What community resources are utilized? What are the gaps? b) U of Minnesota Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Policy? Make the simple changes to intake forms to collect the data.
- 2) a) Father-specific research. How many? Custody? Paternity acknowledged?
- 3) a) Evaluate programs / methodology so we know what works then we can do more of it.
- 4) a) Evaluation of how effective services are. b) Develop effective follow-up tools. c) Attempt better follow up services.
- 5) c) Self-report and assessment of group-support effectiveness.
- 6) a) Better methods of documenting evaluation of services being provided to offenders. b) Ask direct questions to the parents / offenders.
- 7) a) Pre- and post-testing, self evaluation, partner evaluation. c) Provide outcome data.
- 8) a) Create a tool to indicate what services are working to reduce recidivism.
- 9) a) Groups that are providing direct parenting and specific fathering programs should have their clients complete evaluations regarding the benefits of the programming. b) Collect as much information as we can about what type of parenting services incarcerated fathers would like to have offered. c) Have inmates fill out information upon booking regarding if they are fathers and the number of children they have.
- 10) a) Establish some standards for effective fatherhood programs; b) Work with national organizations and other CBOs; c) Expand our Advisory Committee to do some work ongoing with such a project.
- 11) a) Identify realistic goals for program evaluation and tools that would help to both monitor and improve services.
- 12) a) Post-evaluation forms for program classes; c) Work on an evaluation printout to be mailed.
- 13) a) Evaluate and track effectiveness of transitions programs; standardize.
- 14) a) Needs assessment similar across all facilities for intake.
- 15) a) Share evaluation tools for prison fathering classes; b) Identify existing tools, get permission from agencies to share; c) Council on Crime and Justice could probably share our own evaluation tools.
- 16) a) Devise a more conclusive and empirical method for evaluating individual success in understanding and applying parental practices from fathering/parent education classes in prison.
- 17) a) Impact of parent education course completion on enhanced father involvement and child well-being.
- 18) a) Find and analyze parenting programs for effectiveness; b) Fund an outside agency/organization to conduct the analysis.

OTHER

- 1) a) Community agencies, state services, organizations need to accept responsibility for knowing resources available for fathers throughout state. b) Commitment to Act is one step; membership in MFFN is another; c) DMAD does both of these activities.

- 2) a) Create a state level department that manages pre and post transition services of incarcerated teen parents; b) Show fragmentation and how a centralized department could bring these together; c) Work for the department.
- 3) c) Explore possibility of formalizing of mentor program for released offenders.
- 4) a) Funding availability.
- 5) a) Have the state appoint a position of Resource Director for fathering services. b) Educate legislators and policy makers on the need for this position. c) Support the need for one central contact to coordinate the State's services.
- 6) a) Develop some type of Clearing House or Hub for information and resources; b) Bring in for-profit companies, i.e., Quest, 3M, General Mills, UPS to set up a software program; c) Staff location for one of the places to access information and resources.
- 7) a) Directory of Services for Transition – Targeted Resource Guide.
- 8) a) How do you educate corrections / probation about what fathers need to know prior to their release from jail / prison? b) Contact the MAJPS president and ask to participate in the spring conference and advise of all the connections MFFN has with them; c) Attend the conference.
- 9) b) More talk around state – jails, social workers; c) Talk more – get more volunteers to help.
- 10) Education: a) Implement education and training for administration (city, county, state); c) Training for administrative staff on importance of fathers participation in city, county, CBOs.
- 11) Education: a) System wide parenting education program could be developed, implemented and evaluated for impact; b) Grant to implement, train and evaluate program; c) Curriculum development, training and evaluation.